

# High praise for international journalists agricultural tour

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BROOKS BULLETIN

At the end of June representatives from the municipalities that make up the County of Newell and the City of Brooks as well as the Eastern Irrigation District hosted a group of international agricultural journalists on a tour that some may not forget.

"It was an incredible trip, adventure in southern Alberta. I'm so very proud how it all came together, the region, the farmers, business owners and organizations that put it together," said Craig Lester who organized the program with the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists.

Lester, who was born and raised in Rolling Hills, said he was proud to showcase his home.

"I was a little overcome with emotion that being able to showcase a region of the province that I came from. Yes, Brooks-Newell was an important piece but also Lethbridge and Taber that I frequented often growing up."

A bus load of journalists representing most continents, arrived at the Lake Newell Sailing Club in the evening following a day of tours along the way.

In the evening the journalists were treated to entertainment and conversation, mouties in Red Serge and a horse that was well photographed and a welcoming group of people.

"They were so comfortable. You didn't have the journalists sitting at one table and all the representatives at another. They were all

mixed together. They felt so welcomed the second they arrived.

"They actually didn't want to leave. That was the case at every single stop," he said.

The following day continued with tours of the local area by EID tour guides who showcased the aqueduct and Bassano Dam, representatives from the city, county and Bassano and Bow River MP Martin Shields.

Farmer Art Folkerts gave a tour of his peas and seed canola and provided some of his expertise in growing crops and the Graham Family showcased their feed lot operations.

At Pivot Spirits, business owners Lars Hirsch and Rachelle Fiset provided a meal and a farm to glass tour.

The day, which started

at the Brooks Aqueduct ended at the Bassano Dam where the EID continued their conversation on the importance of water in the region.

Following the tour Lester said he heard multiple comments from attendees who said they were impressed with the event and the area's diversity.

"They were just very impressed with everything," he said.

"I saw a lot of great deal of pride from the farmers, the business owners and from the different organizations just to be able to tell their story during the course," he said.

Lester, who has been on a number of tours with the federation, found that the level of welcoming and connectivity between reporters and local residents, whether

municipal or business owners, was unique and he often had to pry people away from the interviews and conversations to keep to a schedule.

"This was new to me," he said.

Humboldt, Saskatchewan freelance journalist Becky Zimmer said she found the tour fascinating with what's going on with irrigation as did many of the journalists from countries where there are water problems.

"It gave them a really interesting perspective with what can be done for collecting water, distributing water and for having that social element as well with how a system works within a community of so many people needing this resource."

She said her area does see a lot of rain, however, climate change is causing

some drought years and flood years.

"Whether it is dugouts, small collection projects but it's top of mind when dealing with climate change," she said.

"I think we set the bar high," said Lester.

The irrigation tour was one of many choices that the journalists had before and after the main portion of the week long event in Olds.

"I don't want to compare because at the end of the day the important part is that everyone did a really great job with their tours and everyone has made comments in regards to how much they enjoyed each individual tour and they're taking away different things from different tours."

## One Tree World

IRMA MERKL



ONE TREE - Well, another very hot week and hopefully so far, no bad storms, but not very much needed rain either. It's very hot today as I was doing my news this Sunday with a temperature of 33- 34C and not a breeze.

The pivots are running full tilt, as the crops are in bad need of the moisture to fill the grain heads and to keep the other crops growing.

Karl and Linda Slomp were camping from Thursday to Monday at Dinosaur Provincial Park. David and Melissa and family, were there too. Then on Saturday Caroline and Levi Wadsworth and family of Brooks were all out there for a family campout. I'm sure they were all having a

great time.

On Saturday Michelle and Jeff Richardson and daughters Lily and Macy of Diamond Valley came to have a quick visit with her parents, Ozzie and Elizabeth and to pick up their dog. Jeff and Michelle and Lily and Macy had spent a week in New York on "A Make a Wish Foundation" trip from the Cancer foundation for Lily. Meanwhile Ozzie looked after their dog, or as Ozzie said "the dog looked after them." They went home after a short time.

Birthday greetings for the coming week go out to Glenda Charlton on July 13th; to Jason Merkl of Edgely, SK and to Ryan Juss, both on July 14th; to Ed Rath of Brooks and to Jason Mortensen, both on July

16th and to Inge Ellefson on July 17th. Also, birthday greetings go out to two of my friends Mary Webber of Brooks and to Vivian Wiebe of Rosemary, both on July 14th. We wish each of you all a great day and a "Very Happy Birthday" to each of you and to everyone else that is celebrating a birthday this week. We wish everyone all the best for the years ahead.

Happy anniversary wishes go out to Chad and Dillison Buteau on July 15th. We wish you both all the very best for many great and healthy years together.

"Here's a Point Of Information"

"Re:-Alcoma School Celebration"

To begin with something important

that wasn't mentioned was that back when the then New Alcoma School was opened (1948-1949) which happened after the amalgamation of Bow Slope Elementary, Bow Slope High School and the old Alcoma schools. The Bow Slope High School Principal was Mr. E.H. Gabert from 1946-48, therefore he was the first Principal of the then New Alcoma school till the fall of 1949. They had two children, a son Larry and a daughter Donna, while they lived in Rainier. After they moved to Rosemary they had another daughter Linda Faye and he taught there till his retirement. Both Mr. and Mrs. Gabert passed away in 2017.

We, then had Mr. and Mrs. J.A. Noviski had come

and he was the Principal from 1949 to 1954. He also taught Shop-Wood-working and both the boys and girls alike took shop and we made many very nice items. I still have my two end tables that I'd made, which I cherish to this day as it reminds me of my days at Alcoma. Mrs. Adele Noviski was also active in the community and she was the leader of the Girls 4-H Sewing Club under the direction of Home Economist Norma Jean Gray. She also did the Janitorial duties and kept the school in immaculate condition. After 1954 they moved to Strathmore where he taught shop for many years. They have both passed away many years ago.

Also, some of the other teachers that taught in

Alcoma were:- Margaret (Clyne) Douglas, Connie Gausman, whose husband Vern was the school caretaker.

This was the best of my memories of Alcoma School. I also attended the Kitsim School from 1942-1944, with (Grades 1 to 9), when it was closed, then we had to go to the Bow Slope Elementary from 1944 to 1948.

I hope that this will fill in some of the missing links..

I hope everyone is enjoying the heat of this summer, I just find it too intense. I do remember when I was a teenager, we had some very hot summers too. So, I guess this is nothing new.

# Threatened by shortages, electric car makers race for supplies of lithium for batteries

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PLANT MAGAZINE

BEIJING (AP) - Threatened by possible shortages of lithium for electric car batteries, automakers are racing to lock in supplies of the once-obscure "white gold" in a politically and environmentally fraught competition from China to Nevada to Chile.

General Motors Co. and the parent company of China's BYD Auto Ltd. went straight to the source and bought stakes in lithium miners, a rare step in an industry that relies on outside vendors for copper and other raw materials. Others are investing in lithium refining or ventures to recycle the silvery-white metal from used batteries.

A shortfall in lithium supplies would be an obstacle for plans to ramp up sales to tens of millions of electric vehicles a year. It is fueling political conflict over resources and complaints about the environmental cost of extracting them.

"We already have that risk" of not being able to get enough, GM's chief financial officer, Paul A. Jacobson,

said at a Deutsche Bank conference in mid-June.

"We've got to have partnerships with people that can get us the lithium in the form that we need," Jacobson said.

Ford Motor Co. has signed contracts stretching up to 11 years into the future with lithium suppliers on two continents. Volkswagen AG and Honda Motor Co. are trying to reduce their need for freshly mined ore by forming recycling ventures.

Global lithium output is on track to triple this decade, but sales of electric SUVs, sports cars and sedans that rose 55% last year threaten to outrun that. Each battery requires about eight kilograms (17 pounds) of lithium, plus cobalt, nickel and other metals.

"There will be a shortage of EV battery supplies," said Joshua Cobb, senior auto analyst for BMI.

Adding to uncertainty, lithium has emerged as another conflict in strained U.S.-Chinese relations.

Beijing, Washington and other governments see metal supplies for electric vehicles as a strategic issue and are tightening controls on access. Canada ordered

three Chinese companies last year to sell lithium mining assets on security grounds.

Other governments including Indonesia, Chile and Zimbabwe are trying to maximize their return on deposits of lithium, cobalt and nickel by requiring miners to invest in refining and processing before they can export.

GM is buying direct access to lithium by investing \$650 million in the Canadian developer of a Nevada mine that is the biggest U.S. source. In return, GM says it will get enough for 1 million vehicles a year.

Conservationists and American Indians are asking a federal court to block development of the Nevada mine, which the Biden administration has embraced as part of its clean energy agenda. Opponents say it might poison water supplies and soil and pollute nesting grounds for birds.

Despite rising output, the industry may face shortages of lithium and cobalt as early as 2025 if enough isn't invested in production, according to Leonardo Paoli and Timur Gul of the International Energy

Agency.

"Supply side bottlenecks are becoming a real challenge," Paoli and Gul said in a report last year.

Automakers might be putting in their own money to reassure "notoriously risk-averse" miners, according to Alastair Bedwell of GlobalData. He said miners are reluctant to "go all out" on lithium until they are sure the industry won't switch to batteries made with other metals.

Even if they do, developing lithium sources is a yearslong process.

Worldwide lithium resources are estimated at 80 million tons by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Bolivia's are the biggest at 21 million tons, followed by Australia with 17 million and Chile with 9 million.

Forecasts of annual production range as high as 1.5 million tons by 2030. But demand, if EV sales keep rising at double-digit annual rates, is forecast to increase to up to 3 million tons.

EV sales took off in 2021, more than doubling over the previous year to 6.8 million, according to EV Volumes, a research firm. Last year's sales rose to 10.5 million.

China accounted for 60% of last year's sales, two-thirds of production and three-quarters of battery manufacturing.

President Joe Biden last year announced an official goal for half of all new cars sold in the United State to be electric or other zero-emissions technology by 2030.

As sales rise, so does official anxiety, especially in Washington and Beijing, about access to lithium and other minerals and the potential for strategic competition.

Volkswagen's battery unit, PowerCo, signed an agreement with Canada last August to develop suppliers of "critical raw materials" including lithium, cobalt and nickel.

The German chancellor, Olaf Scholz, in a statement welcomed cooperation with "close friends" on 'raw material security.'

China's government has accused the United States, Canada, Japan and other governments of misusing phony security concerns to hurt Chinese competitors in electric cars, smartphones, clean energy and other emerging technologies.

Other governments welcome Chinese investment. China's biggest lithium producer, Ganfeng Lithium Co., bought Argentina's Lithea Inc. last year for \$962 million.

About two-thirds of the world's lithium comes from mines. That involves crushing rock and using acids to extract metals. It leaves toxic heaps of chemical-laced tailings.

The rest is extracted from salt lakes or salt flats. That can require vast evaporation ponds.

The industry is working on technology to extract lithium from hot springs and clay deposits with less environmental impact.

As they ramp up supplies, automakers face another bottleneck: Lack of refining capacity to purify raw lithium into battery material.

Tesla Inc. is building a refinery in Texas. Others including BMW AG are buying stakes in refiners.

As for GM, "I don't know" whether it will build its own refinery, Jacobson said.